Design and Organization

Start2Farm

What is Start2Farm?

- The Curriculum and Training Clearinghouse was established under the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program as a way to identify available training resources.

- The clearinghouse is intended as a knowledge management tool to help gather available resources for beginning farmers and ranchers.

Scoping out the current offerings

- Find programs currently available.
  - USDA and other federal programs
  - State Departments of Agriculture
  - Land Grant System
  - Non-Profit Organizations
  - Grass Roots Organizations

- Follow leads to any other promising programs

What we discovered

- It isn't as simple as manuals and worksheets. Available training and resources come in extremely diverse formats.
  - Workshops, seminars, manuals, online tutorials, worksheets, online classes, farm tours, apprenticeships, etc.

- We need a system to manage a wide variety of resources that is easy to update.

Principles of Site Functionality

- Content must be easy to add and update
- Avoid data that constantly changes wherever possible
- Keep database structure and search options simple
- Loose framework- wherever possible let things have their own shape
- Leave room for growth

Identifying Needs

- Rural Information Center and Alternative Farming Systems Information Center reference records.
- Used USDA ERS report on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers by Ahearn and Newton.
  - http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB53/
- Feedback from users.

Identifying Needs

- The audience:

  - new to farming
  - already farming

  - trainers and service providers
  - policy makers and funders
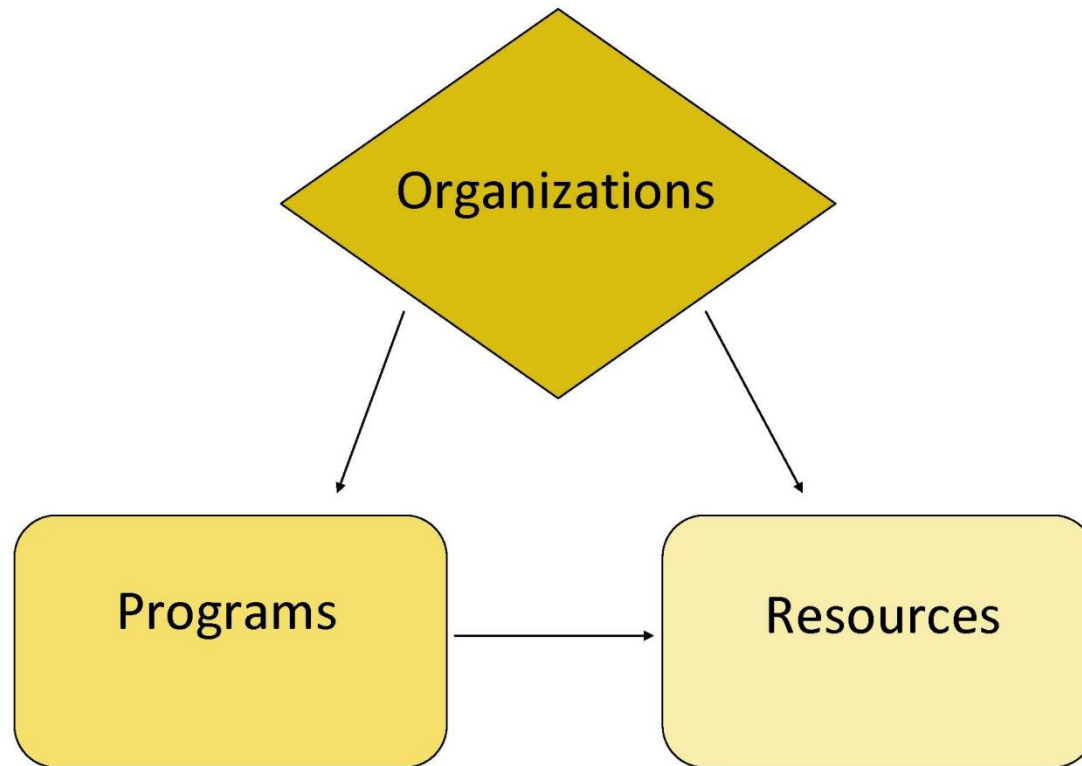 - educators

Identifying Needs

- The types of services

  - education and training
  - financing
  - technical services
  - networks

Organization of the Clearinghouse-

- **Three types of records**

  - Organizations
  - Programs
  - Resources

Database Structure

Organizations

- Organizations, groups, agencies, universities, etc. that are running programs and creating resources.

- Adding these ensures connectivity and uniformity.

Programs

- A set of activities specifically created and performed to achieve a particular outcome or to provide a certain product or service.
- Examples
  - Class or internship
  - Loan
  - Consulting service
  - Etc.

Resources

- A Thing
- Examples
  - Manuals
  - Websites
  - Tutorials
  - Worksheets
  - Database
  - Etc.

Collection Development and Linking Policies

- Draws the picture of the collection

- Protects integrity of the collection by defining its parameters

- Reinforces the congressional mandates

Collection Development

- Focus is on establishing farm and ranch businesses

- Practical training not theoretical or academic

- Not specific to any particular farming practice

Linking Policy

- Ensures quality of linked information
- Manages broken links
- Links should be stable and go to a trusted site and avoid sites that
  - are covered with banner ads or other flashing advertising
  - are hard to distinguish between advertisements and actual informational content
  - cannot determine the authorship of the site
  - promote discrimination of _any_ group

Future Plans

- Addition of external data sources such as NAL digital collections

- Addition of 'find a book' function

- Translation of site into Spanish

- Expanded and improved search capabilities

- K-12 resources, addendum to CD policy

How you can help

- Link to Start2Farm.gov from your site
- Send us pictures and success stories, with signed permission forms
- Get an extranet log in

  - Add your own programs and resources

  - Participate in the forums
- Consider donating a copy of your resources to the National Agricultural Library

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